



Project: Arkansas Aging and Disability Resource Center Initiative

Organization: Area Agency on Aging of Southwest Arkansas

Principle of Choices for Independence: Empowerment/Access to Information and Services

Description

As a 2004 Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) grantee, an original state to participate in the Cash and Counseling consumer-directed services model, and a participant in the CMS Money Follows the Person initiative, Arkansas is making it easier for consumers to learn about existing services and supports while allowing its residents access to services in the least restrictive setting. Through the ADRC initiative, Arkansas is using this opportunity to create seamless access into long-term care by integrating the multiple eligibility forms and procedures for various public programs that help finance long-term supports.

Arkansas' ADRC initiative is currently being piloted in 12 counties in the planning and service area of AAA of Southwest Arkansas. Through this innovative model, Arkansas has created a "person centered" experience which allows the consumer to access services (including Medicaid) without ever having to walk into a Medicaid office or leave their home. The AAA of Southwest Arkansas has used the ADRC to equip case managers and outreach specialists with laptops, portable scanners and printers in order to complete assessments in real time in a person's home. The Arkansas ADRC has the capability to provide:

- Current information on public and private benefit programs such as Medicare, prescription drug assistance, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid and other home and community-based services
- Assistance in arranging paperwork to apply for benefits; and
- One-on-one confidential counseling to determine a person's needs.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been implemented between the Department of Human Services-Division of County Operations and the Area Agency on Aging of Southwest Arkansas, Inc. This creates a seamless application process for ADRC clients as they are no longer required to submit documents to the county Medicaid office. As a result of the partnerships developed through the ADRC, the amount of time it takes for eligibility determination has been reduced by 50% for applications submitted by ADRC staff.

Another example of how Arkansas is using technology and partnerships to improve access is the approach taken to overcome the lack of Internet access in very rural areas of SW Arkansas. The state of Arkansas has created an invaluable statewide resource of services for older adults and people with disabilities known as AR-GetCare. It is designed to help you locate resources that may assist you or a family member to continue living at home or in your community. Arkansas partnered with RTZ who developed a software-based version of the CARE Tool, known as the GetCare Traveler. The Traveler continues to enable ADRC staff to download client records and enter assessments, progress notes and service enrollments while in clients' homes. That data can then be uploaded into the online system, saving ADRC staff time and energy.

For more information about the Arkansas ADRC, please visit [http://www.agewithdignity.com]. The contact for the project is David Sneed, Executive Director at 870-234-7410 or by email at aaaswa@magnolia-net.com

<http://www.argetcure.org/>